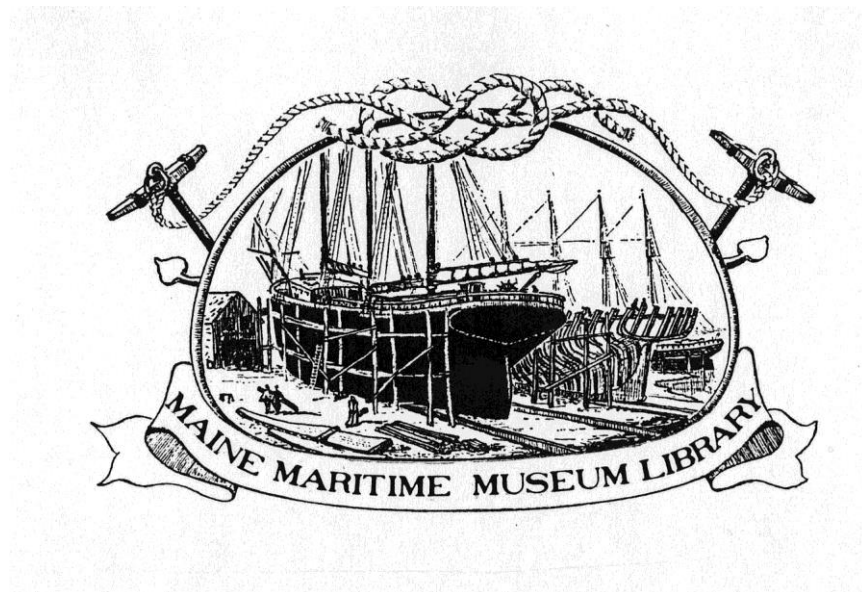


**Maine Maritime Museum Library**

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**Inventory  
for  
Manuscript Collection  
MS-50**

**William F. Palmer Fleet Collection**

**Inclusive dates 1837 - 1979**

**Bulk dates: 1899-1910**

**by**

**Elizabeth Singer Maule**

Edited by Nathan R. Lipfert

1997

Shelf feet: 12 (not including plans)

Number of boxes: 25 (not including plans)

*Accession # 93.063.01 - .65*

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## **Abstract**

**Palmer, William F., 1859-1909.**

William F. Palmer Fleet Collection, 1837-1979 (bulk dates 1899-1910).  
25 boxes (12 shelf feet), not including plans.

Owner and manager of Boston-based coal-carrying fleet of fifteen four- and five-mast schooners.

Papers of William F. Palmer (1859-1909) relating primarily to the construction and operation of his fleet. Include outgoing correspondence, extensive documentation of ownership, construction contracts and photographs. Some plans are also available. Documentation of Palmer's interest in naval architecture, especially his yachts, is also included, as are some family materials. Organized in three series: I, Manuscripts (18 boxes) II, Photographs (7 boxes) III, Plans (presently unorganized).

Purchased from Paul C. Palmer, grandson of William F. Palmer, 1993.

Accession #93.063.01 - .65

Related material available at repository, esp. PC-052 and PL-08.

Finding aid in repository, folder level control.

Added entries: Shipbuilding—Contracts; Stock certificates; Shipyards--Waldoboro (ME); Palmer family; Palmer Fleet; Palmer, William F. (1859-1909); Coal trade.

## **Restrictions**

There are no restrictions on the use of these papers.

## **Acquisition**

The William F. Palmer Fleet Collection was purchased from Palmer's grandson in 1993 through the generous gifts of thirty donors. The accession number is P93.63.1-65.

## **Foreword**

The processing of the William F. Palmer Fleet Collection and the preparation of this inventory have been made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, a granting arm of the United States National Archives and Records Administration.

The processor wishes to thank volunteer Bud Guild for photocopying all the newspaper clippings and staff member Nathan Lipfert for writing the successful grant. Morrison Bump provided additional genealogical material.

## Introduction

The William F. Palmer Fleet Collection described in this inventory covers the years 1837-1979, with bulk dates of ca. 1899-1910. Because of the varying formats of the materials, the collection is stored in three parts, each a series: the manuscripts as MS-50 (18 boxes) the photographs as PC-52 (7 boxes) the plans as PL-8. As of May, 1995, the plans had not been organized, although many can easily be found.

The manuscripts (Series I) document Palmer's construction and management of the fifteen large schooners he designed to carry such bulk cargo as coal. Called the Second Palmer Fleet (not to be confused with the Nathaniel T. Palmer Fleet of Bath, ME), these white schooners very successfully plied the waters of the East and Gulf Coasts between 1900 and 1910, when the remaining fleet was sold. Also included are materials about Palmer's interest in yacht design and some family letters.

The photographs (Series II) are primarily of the Palmer Fleet and include some taken after collisions. There are many others of Palmer's yachts and family and a few of miscellaneous vessels. The plans (Series III) include linens and blue-line prints done by Palmer of his schooners and yachts. Intermediate mylars have been made of the schooner drawings and are readily available for copying or study (see Appendix C).

The collection remained in the family until it was purchased in September, 1993, by Maine Maritime Museum through the generous gifts of thirty friends. It seems to have remained relatively intact with the notable exception that there is no incoming correspondence, general account ledger, or accounting of individual voyages for each of the schooners. Perhaps these were disposed of or turned over to J. S. Winslow & Co., who in 1910 bought and subsequently managed the Palmer Fleet..

The general condition of the Collection is good. One letter copybook (Box 6/2) had been water-damaged, and a few of the drawings are fragile. Loose, disintegrating newspaper clippings have been photocopied onto acid-free paper and the originals thrown away, with the exception of those pasted into Albert Convers' scrapbook (Box 18/1). Conservation consisted simply of removing staples and paper clips, putting a few items into polyester sleeves, and photocopying the loose news clippings.

## Historical Note

William F. Palmer (1859-1909) spent the first nineteen years after his 1880 graduation from Williams College studying law, teaching, and serving as a principal in several schools in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. While at Bristol Academy in Taunton, MA, from 1888-1898, Palmer apparently studied naval architecture with G. B. Wilbur. (He may also have known Capt. John G. Crowley.) How Palmer, who grew up in Webster, MA (near the RI border), came to be interested in sailing, boats and cargoes is not clear, but he certainly developed strong interests and began to design yachts. A few were built, including **Palmyra** for his own use and **Paralos**.

During the time that Palmer was at Bristol Academy, Taunton was the New England hub of the bituminous (soft) coal trade, serving as a distribution point for many area mills. Albert Winslow of Taunton designed fifty four three- and four-mast

schooners in the 1870's and 1880's. Palmer must have observed all this activity and kept it in his mind.

In 1898 Palmer moved to Malden, MA (outside Boston), to become principal of the high school, but he stayed only about a year. Just as the center of the coal trade shifted to Boston, Palmer changed careers in 1899 he bought an unfinished Bath (ME) schooner hull and within a few months had launched the **Marie Palmer**, the first of his famous fleet. By 1908, there were fourteen large, white hulled schooners engaged primarily in the coal trade. (Another had been sold in 1906 to pay her salvage bills.)

Palmer served as managing owner, designing the vessels, recruiting the capital, supervising the construction, and handling the day-to-day operation of the fleet. His success to 1907 was spectacular, with the return on investment averaging twenty percent. In 1905, the fleet made forty coal voyages to Boston and Portland, ME, from Virginia and the Chesapeake. The following year, the **Davis Palmer** alone made thirteen voyages. In 1908, however, there was a sudden and severe economic downturn which reduced profits to about four percent. At this time, specially designed steam colliers began to appear on the runs north of Cape Cod, and, despite the impetus provided to coastal shipping by World War I, sail-powered vessels never recovered their former share of the trade.

Palmer's fleet consisted of two four-mast wooden schooners and thirteen five-mast wooden schooners--all with large carrying capacity. He himself designed all but the **Marie**, the **Jane**, and the **Elizabeth**. The Palmer schooners were painted white and carried the name \_\_\_ Palmer, the first name being the name of a family member or large share holder. After 1903 the shares were sold as stock, and most shares were held in trust by Palmer for management purposes. The business was run out of his home in Dorchester, MA, with considerable help from his wife Marie. He employed other stenographers, as well as George E. Dunn and Albert [?] L. Fuller, the latter acting as assistant manager. When coal cargoes could not be obtained, the schooners typically carried railway ties, phosphate rock or sulfur. In 1901, the **Rebecca Palmer** took a cargo of case oil to Europe, becoming the first five-mast schooner to cross the Atlantic. Palmer used Yates & Porterfield as his New York agents and James Bliss & Co. in Boston for provisioning and chandlery both companies owned shares in several vessels. Known as the Second Palmer Fleet (the first being owned by Nathaniel Palmer - no relation - of Bath, ME), it was one of the biggest in operation for the first decade of this century..

After Palmer's sudden death in September, 1909, Marie ran the fleet for about a year the vessels were then sold to J. S. Winslow & Co. of Portland, ME. The vessels kept their names but were repainted black. The Winslow fleet in turn was sold to the France & Canada Steamship Co. in 1917.

Palmer himself remarked in 1907 that "...these large fore-and-aft vessels are very nearly to the limit of present conditions of material.... We build ships for money we build them for their average dividend. I submit, as long as these are vessels of commerce...that they shall be judged by the rate of return they make...." [SNAME, Vol. 15 1907, p. 201]. He was proud, an expert at keeping costs down. He bragged about the freight rates he got. His colorful writing reveals a great deal about the machinations of business in the early twentieth century.

The *Boston Globe* stated in his obituary, Sept. 30, 1909, "He had the distinction of having built more tonnage in wooden vessels than any other man, firm or corporation in

the history of American navigation. [This is not true, of course, but it is interesting that it was stated.] His fourteen vessels are estimated to carry 1,000,000 tons of freight a year." It was indeed a remarkable fleet to have built in the short span of a decade.

## Outline

### Series I. Manuscripts (MS-50)

- A. Company letterhead, etc.
- B. W. F. Palmer notebooks
- C. Palmer Fleet correspondence, outgoing
- D. Fleet management
  - 1. ownership
  - 2. accounts
  - 3. construction
  - 4. repairs
  - 5. Palmer Fleet captains
  - 6. management of fleet after WFP's death
- E. Fleet records
  - 1. **Baker Palmer**
  - 2. **Davis Palmer**
  - 3. **Dorothy Palmer**
  - 4. **Elizabeth Palmer**
  - 5. **Fannie Palmer** (1)
  - 6. **Fannie Palmer** (2)
  - 7. **Fuller Palmer**
  - 8. **Harwood Palmer**
  - 9. **Jane Palmer**
  - 10. **Marie Palmer**
  - 11. **Maude Palmer**
  - 12. **Paul Palmer**
  - 13. **Prescott Palmer**
  - 14. **Rebecca Palmer**
  - 15. **Singleton Palmer**
- F. Misc. business records
- G. Family
  - 1. genealogy and early deeds
  - 2. W. F. Palmer
  - 3. Marie E. (Convers) Palmer
  - 4. Fannie (Palmer) Gfroerer
  - 5. Paul Palmer
  - 6. Albert E. Convers
- H. Misc.

Series II. Photographs (PC-52)

A. Fleet photos

1. **Baker Palmer**
2. **Davis Palmer**
3. **Dorothy Palmer**
4. **Elizabeth Palmer**
5. **Fannie Palmer** (1)
6. **Fannie Palmer** (2)
7. **Fuller Palmer**
8. **Harwood Palmer**
9. **Jane Palmer**
10. **Marie Palmer**
11. **Maude Palmer**
12. **Paul Palmer**
13. **Prescott Palmer**
14. **Rebecca Palmer**
15. **Singleton Palmer**
16. Palmer fleet, but name of vessel uncertain
17. non-Palmer vessels

B. Family photos

1. Palmer family [?] and homestead in Webster, MA
2. W. F. Palmer
3. Marie E. (Convers) Palmer
4. Fannie (Palmer) Gfroerer
5. Paul Palmer

Series III. Plans (PL-8) [unprocessed as of May, 1995]

- A. Palmer schooner plans
- B. Palmer-designed yachts
- C. Other

### **Scope and Content**

The William F. Palmer Fleet Collection (bulk dates 1899-1910) documents Palmer's construction and management of the fifteen large, wooden schooners he designed to carry coal in bulk. There are outgoing letter copy books with correspondence from Palmer to his captains, the shareholders, suppliers and builders detailed records of shares held by owners construction contracts news clippings and photographs for each of the schooners. Drawings for about half the schooners are also available. There are a few accounts and some records indicating how the fleet was managed after Palmer's unexpected death in 1909. Palmer's notebooks, however, provide the most detailed information surviving about dividends, records of trips, etc., while his letters provide the most color about the man and his business methods.

In addition to the business records, there are papers about Palmer's family as well. These include letters, primarily written among Palmer, his wife Marie and their children



Fannie and Paul from December, 1908, to April, 1909, when the children were in Dorchester and their parents were in Palm Beach, FL. Deeds from Palmer's parents' farm in Webster, MA, records of Paul's schoolwork, a genealogical chart, letters between Paul and Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker (author of *The Great Coal Schooners of New England*), a scrapbook from Palmer's brother-in-law Albert Convers, and many photographs of family members are part of the family segments of the collection. Some of the photos are of cruises made by Paul, including one on **Wander Bird**.

Finally, there are materials - notes, sketches, drawings, photos and letters - regarding Palmer's interest in yacht design. Some of these yachts were for his own use (**Palm, Palmyra** and **Palmetto**), but others were designed and built for clients. A few of his plans were even published (Box 16/22, 23, 25). Palmer received notes and letters from the naval architect G. B. Wilbur of Taunton, who may have been his mentor, and some of these have survived.

The primary arrangement of the papers is by format. Thus, Series I is manuscripts regarding both the fleet of schooners and the family. Series II is photographs, primarily of Palmer schooners, yachts, and family members. Series III is plans (drawings) of Palmer's schooners and yachts. In each series there is a small amount of miscellaneous material.

## Container List

### Series I. Manuscripts, stored as MS-50 1837-1979 (bulk dates, 1899-1910)

|       |        |    |  |
|-------|--------|----|--|
| Box 1 | Folder | 1  | Company letterhead, ca. 1908 and undated   |
|       |        | 2  | shipping orders, business cards, misc., ca. 1901-1907  |
|       |        | 3  | WFP notebooks (3), 1901 and 1903   |
|       |        | 4  | notebooks (4), re: fleet, ca. 1905-1908 [1 seems to pertain particularly to<br><b>Fuller Palmer</b> contains some dividends] |
|       |        | 5  | notebook, trips of fleet, 1909   |
|       |        | 6  | Palmer Fleet, outgoing correspondence, letter copybook, 1901 March 21-1902<br>February 11, indexed                           |
|       |        | 2  | 1 1902 February 11 - 1903 June 11, indexed   |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1903 June 12 - 1904 May 4, indexed   |
|       |        | 3  | 1 1904 May 4 - May 19, indexed [many blank pages]  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1904 May 20 - October 6, indexed   |
|       |        | 4  | 1 1904 October 7 - 1905 January 31, indexed  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1905 February 1 - June 24, indexed   |
|       |        | 5  | 1 1905 June 24 - November 9, indexed   |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1905 November 10 - 1906 March 12, indexed  |
|       |        | 6  | 1 1906 March 12 - August 28, indexed   |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1906 August 28 - December 27, indexed [some water damage]  |
|       |        | 7  | 1 1906 December 28 - 1907 May 24, indexed  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1907 May 27 - November 11, indexed   |
|       |        | 8  | 1 1907 November 11 - 1908 May 20, indexed  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1908 May 19 - December 15, indexed   |
|       |        | 9  | 1 1908 December 16 - 1909 March 11, indexed [many blank pages]   |
|       |        | 2  | 2 1909 March 12 - October 9, indexed   |
|       |        | 3  | 3 misc. incoming, 1907-1909 and undated  |
|       |        | 10 | 1 Fleet management, ownership, blank bill of sale  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 misc. ownership, 1902-1909 and undated [s.a. Box 11]   |
|       |        | 3  | 3 accounts, notes of WFP 1900-1902 and undated   |
|       |        | 4  | 4 dividend bulletins, 1901 and undated   |
|       |        | 5  | 5 construction, contracts 1900   |
|       |        | 6  | 6 bills and receipts, 1903-1904  |
|       |        | 7  | 7 suppliers' advertising, 1895-1899  |
|       |        | 8  | 8 comparative cost of recent schooners, ca. 1900   |
|       |        | 9  | 9 sketch of repairs, undated   |
|       |        | 10 | 10 Palmer Fleet captains, ca. 1909   |
|       |        | 11 | 11 management of fleet after WFP's death, correspondence 1909-1910   |
|       |        | 12 | 12 accounts, 1910 and undated  |
|       |        | 13 | 13 transfer of ownership to stock shares, 1909-1910  |
|       |        | 14 | 14 share certificates, 1910  |
|       |        | 15 | 15 treasurer's report, 1911-1916   |
|       |        | 16 | 16 J. S. Winslow & Co. reports, 1913-1917  |
|       |        | 11 | ownership: card file arranged alphabetically and by vessel (except for<br><b>Fannie</b> (2) and <b>Fuller</b> )              |
|       |        | 12 | 1 Fleet records, <b>Baker Palmer</b> , ownership and share certificates 1903-1904  |
|       |        | 2  | 2 misc., 1900-1903   |
|       |        | 3  | 3 contracts for construction, 1900 [inc.1 adapted from <b>Rebecca Palmer</b> ]   |
|       |        | 4  | 4 correspondence, 1900-1901  |

5 accounts, 1900-1916  
 6 misc.  
 7 **Davis Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1905-1908  
 8 misc. 1905 and undated  
 9 contracts for construction, 1904-1905  
 10 correspondence and misc., 1952 and undated [inc. account of loss]  
 11 **Dorothy Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1903-1909  
 12 misc., 1902-1903  
 13 contracts for construction, 1901-1903  
 14 misc.  
 15 **Elizabeth Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1903-1909  
 16 misc., ca. 1903-1910  
 17 contracts for construction, 1903  
 18 correspondence and accounts, 1903  
 19 misc.  
 13 1 **Fannie Palmer** (1), ownership and share certificates 1903  
 2 misc., 1901-1904  
 3 contracts for construction, 1899-1900  
 4 specifications and materials, undated [inc. timber left  
 over, possibly used for **Rebecca** or **Baker**]  
 5 accounts, summaries, 1900  
 6 general, 1900 and undated  
 7 labor, 1900  
 8 diagram, framing detail, undated  
 9 accounts, 1900-1902  
 10 mishaps, collision, 1902, w/ **Charles D. Hall** (sch)  
 11 message from bottle, 1904 [after hurricane s.a.17/29]  
 12 misc. [inc. launching invitation]  
 13 **Fannie Palmer** (2), ownership and share certificates 1907  
 14 misc., 1907 and undated  
 15 contract for construction, 1906  
 16 loss statement, 1917  
 17 **Fuller Palmer**, WFP notes, 1908  
 18 ownership and share certificates 1908  
 19 misc., 1908-1910 and undated  
 20 accounts, construction 1908  
 21 misc., 1908 and undated [inc. launching invitation]  
 22 **Harwood Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1904-1908  
 23 misc., 1904 and undated  
 24 contracts for construction, 1904  
 25 list of mishaps, 1905-1910  
 26 misc.  
 14 1 **Jane Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1904-1908  
 2 misc., 1904-1910 and undated  
 3 contracts for construction, 1904  
 4 court records, 1904  
 5 receipts, 1904 and misc.  
 6 **Marie Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1903-1909  
 7 misc., 1903 and undated  
 8 contracts for construction, 1899  
 9 blank receipts for crew wages  
 10 **Maude Palmer**, ownership, share certificates, 1903-1908  
 11 misc., 1903 and undated  
 12 contracts for construction, 1899-1900

- 13 **Paul Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1902-1907
- 14 misc., 1902
- 15 contracts for construction, 1901-1902
- 16 misc. [inc. launching invitations for launch that was postponed]
- 17 **Prescott Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1902-1907
- 18 misc., 1902-1908
- 19 contracts for construction, 1901
- 20 trip accounts, [1902]
- 21 misc.
- 15 1 **Rebecca Palmer**, ownership and share certificates 1903-1908
- 2 misc., 1903
- 3 contracts for construction, 1900
- 4 specifications and materials, undated
- 5 trip accounts, [1901]
- 6 misc.
- 7 **Singleton Palmer**, ownership, share certificates, 1904-1910
- 8 misc., 1904 and undated
- 9 contracts for construction, 1901-1903
- 10 accounts, 1903-1904
- 11 labor, 1903-1904 (bound)
- 12 misc., 1903-1904
- 13 misc.
- 14 Misc. business records, WFP notes on accounts and naval architecture, undated
- 15 Society of Naval Architects & Marine Engineers, 1909, membership & bylaws
- 16 discussion by WFP of paper on *Wooden Sailing Ships*, B. B. Crown-
- inshield, 1907
- 17 *Atlantic Carriers' Association*, list of officers, 1906
- 18 *Code List of Merchant Vessels of the U.S.*, 1903, Part VI
- 19 material on vessels not built, Arthur Sewall & Co., 1900
- 20 John H. Dialogue & Son, 1901
- 16 1 news clippings, book [clippings removed to Folder 2 and photocopied on acid-
- free paper]
- 2 photocopied clippings from Folder 1 [relate to individual vessels of
- Palmer fleet]
- 3 misc., inc. the "other Palmer fleet [Bath]"
- 4 misc. envelopes, etc.
- 5 Family, genealogy [s.a. chart in Series III], 1st American Palmer
- 6 Palmer family deeds to land in Webster, MA, 1856-1905 [s.a. 17/17]
- 7 WFP, correspondence, letters to his daughter Fannie 1908-1909
- 8 to his son Paul, 1908-1909
- 9 to Fannie and Paul, 1908-1909
- 10 misc., 1908 and undated
- 11 accounts, 1893-1900
- 12 deeds to Dorchester property, 1898-1905
- 13 Williams College Class of 1880, *1890 Reports* [WFP lists his own
- activities on back cover]
- 14 Bristol Academy, Taunton, MA, *Prospectus*, 1891
- 15 trip journal, 1906 [inc. "*Souvenir of the Jubilee 300th Performance*
- Geo. M. Cohan's Musical Play Forty-five Minutes from*
- Broadway*, June 5, 1906 with some personal accts.]
- 16 naval architecture, WFP misc. notes and sketches, undated
- 17 G. B. Wilbur, letter to WFP, 1896, and sketches, undated
- 18 **Acushla** (yacht), undated
- 19 **Hanniel** (schooner, yacht), undated [sales description]

- 20 **Palm** (motor vessel, yacht) [conversion of **Palmetto** (sch) to  
steam launch, 1903] 42'
- 21 **Palm** (motor vessel, yacht) 64', undated
- 22 **Palmetto** (schooner, yacht), 1897-[1902 ?]
- 23 **Palmyra** (sloop, yacht), 1895-1896
- 24 **Paralos** (yacht), undated
- 25 **Rahnee** (sloop, yacht), 1890
- 17 1 Design No. 9, cat boat, undated
- 2 Design No. 13, boat, 1896
- 3 Design No. 14, undated
- 4 Design No. 15, centerboard, undated
- 5 Design No. 16, boat, undated
- 6 Fin for Boat #, undated
- 7 Sloop, undated
- 8 Sailing dinghy, undated
- 9 *Great & only Brown Boat for Lord Lewis*, undated  
[*Fragile*]
- 10 Contract for 42' boat and bill for keel, McIntyre & Kirk,  
Quincy, MA, 1894
- 11 Contract for 46' boat, undated
- 12 letters re: death, 1909
- 13 misc.
- 14 Marie E. (Convers) Palmer, correspondence, letters to her daughter Fannie  
1908-1909
- 15 letters to her son Paul, 1908-1909
- 16 letters to her children Fannie & Paul, 1909
- 17 incoming, from J. Prescott, 1943-1944 [s.a. 16/6]
- 18 accounts, 1916 and undated
- 19 misc.
- 20 Fannie (Palmer) Gfroerer, correspondence 1908-1909 and undated
- 21 Paul Palmer, letterhead and business cards
- 22 correspondence, to his father 1909
- 23 to his mother, 1909-1952
- 24 to his parents, 1909
- 25 to his sister Fannie, 1951-1955
- 26 incoming, 1906-1979
- 27 to and from W. J. Lewis Parker, 1939-1940
- 28 school work, 1909-1919 and undated
- 29 story [prob. by Paul Palmer] of **Fannie Palmer** (1) and message from  
bottle, 1904, undated [s.a. 13/11]
- 30 accounts, 1927-1938 and undated
- 31 misc.
- 18 1 Albert E. Convers, scrapbook, ca. 1900-1917 [contains some articles on Palmer  
fleet, **Wyoming** and other Crowley vessels, letters from young nieces  
and nephews, and many obituaries] *Fragile*.
- 2 Misc., 1837 and undated

## Series II. Photographs, stored as PC-52

- Box 1 Folder 1 Fleet Photos, **Baker Palmer**
- 2 **Baker Palmer**
- 3 **Davis Palmer** [s.a. O.S. Box]
- 4 **Dorothy Palmer** [inc. photo of her loss]

|   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
|   | 5  | <b>Dorothy Palmer</b> [s.a. O.S. Box]   |
|   | 6  | <b>Elizabeth Palmer</b>   |
|   | 7  | <b>Fannie Palmer</b> (1)  |
|   | 8  | <b>Fannie Palmer</b> (1)  |
|   | 9  | <b>Fannie Palmer</b> (2)  |
|   | 10 | <b>Fannie Palmer</b> (2) [inc. photo of model made by Capt. Clarke]                                   |
|   | 11 | <b>Fannie Palmer</b> (2) or <b>Fuller Palmer</b>  |
| 2 | 1  | <b>Fuller Palmer</b>  |
|   | 2  | <b>Harwood Palmer</b> [construction photos]   |
|   | 3  | <b>Harwood Palmer</b> [inc. model]  |
|   | 4  | <b>Harwood Palmer</b> , damage resulting from collision w/ <b>Juniata</b> (str), 1905 [s.a. O.S. Box] |
|   | 5  | <b>Jane Palmer</b>  |
|   | 6  | <b>Jane Palmer</b> [inc. some deck and cabin shots and <b>Androscoggin</b> (str)]                     |
|   | 7  | <b>Marie Palmer</b>   |
|   | 8  | <b>Maude Palmer</b>   |
|   | 9  | <b>Paul Palmer</b>  |
|   | 10 | <b>Paul Palmer</b>  |
|   | 11 | <b>Prescott Palmer</b>  |
|   | 12 | <b>Prescott Palmer</b> [inc. <b>Pennsylvania</b> (str) after collision, 1905]                         |
| 3 | 1  | <b>Rebecca Palmer</b>   |
|   | 2  | <b>Rebecca Palmer</b>   |
|   | 3  | <b>Singleton Palmer</b>   |
|   | 4  | <b>Singleton Palmer</b>   |
|   | 5  | Palmer fleet, but vessel name uncertain [inc. deck shots taken in a heavy sea and cabin shots]        |
|   | 6  | Palmer fleet, construction shots, vessel name uncertain [s.a. O.S. Box]                               |
|   | 7  | Non-Palmer sailing vessels, some unidentified   |
|   | 8  | Powered vessels, some unidentified  |
| 4 | 1  | Family, W. F. Palmer [s.a. O.S. Box]  |
|   | 2  | Palmer family [?]   |
|   | 3  | Palmer homestead, Webster, MA   |
|   | 4  | WFP's mother Jane Palmer  |
|   | 5  | 27 Hartford St., Dorchester, MA   |
|   | 6  | Palm Beach [?]  |
| 7 |    | trip to Virginia  |
|   | 8  | misc. scenes (some unidentified)  |
|   | 9  | friend [?]  |
|   | 10 | <b>Palmetto</b> (schooner, yacht)   |
|   | 11 | <b>Palmyra</b> (sloop, yacht) [s.a. O.S. Box]   |
|   | 12 | <b>Palmyra</b> [?] (sloop, yacht)   |
| 5 | 1  | <b>Palm</b> (motor vessel, yacht)   |
|   | 2  | <b>Palm</b> (motor vessel, yacht) [s.a. Neg. No. 53,007-53,028]                                       |
|   | 3  | <b>Palm</b> (motor vessel, yacht)   |
|   | 4  | misc. yachts, unidentified [s.a. O.S. Box]  |
|   | 5  | Marie E. (Convers) Palmer   |
|   | 6  | Convers family  |
|   | 7  | Fannie and Paul Palmer as children  |
|   | 8  | Fannie Palmer as a child  |
|   | 9  | Paul Palmer as a child  |
| 6 | 1  | as an adult [s.a. O.S. Box]   |
|   | 2  | with his family   |
|   | 3  | cruising  |
|   | 4  | cruising, scenes and other vessels  |

- 5 in other small boats, inc. kayaks
- 6 cruise on **Wander Bird** (sch, yacht)
- 7 early airplanes
- 8 unidentified people
- 9 negatives and slides [inc. 2 SFM Badger paintings of Palmer schooners]  
N.B. There are also 2 boxes of 4"x5" glass plate negatives stored as Neg.  
No. 53,007-53,028. These are primarily of the yacht **Palm** and  
relate to Box 5/2.

O. S. Box      Contents as noted above.

### **Series III. Drawings, stored as PL-8**

This Series had not been processed as of May, 1995. However, it consists of three parts:

- A. Palmer schooner plans
- B. Palmer-designed yachts
- C. Other (unidentified vessels, genealogical chart, yacht club plans, etc.).

Within Part A, intermediate mylars have been made for some plans of the **Rebecca Palmer, Elizabeth Palmer, Marie Palmer, Fannie Palmer** (1), **Baker Palmer, Harwood Palmer** and **Singleton Palmer** copies can easily be made. A list of these mylars is attached as Appendix C.

## Appendix A

### Family Note Sheets

Palmer, William Franklin

- c. William Harris (1831-1864, killed at Bull Run) and Jane Elizabeth (Hoyle) (ca. 1839-1898) Palmer
  - a second son b. after 1859 d. 1864
- b. 1859, May 30, Webster, MA on Palmer farm
- d. 1909, September 29, Dorchester, MA of apoplexy buried in Webster, MA
- m. 1) Carrie Joslin (?-1886) of Webster, MA
  - 2) 1895 July 17 to Marie Elizabeth Convers (1860-1954) of Taunton, MA had worked for Taunton Water Dept. before her marriage
- children: Fannie (1899-ca.1980) m. \_\_\_\_\_ Gfroerer
  - Paul (1901-ca.1990)
- lived: after 1898, at 27 Hartford St., Dorchester, MA
- education: Williams College 1880 studied law 1880-1881, A.M. 1883 from ?
- business: 1881-1884 West Side High School, Danielson, MA principal
  - 1884-1885 Hitchcock Free High School, Brimfield, MA teacher of Greek and Latin
  - 1885-1888 Woonsocket High School, Woonsocket, RI principal
  - 1888-1898 ? Bristol Academy, Taunton, MA, principal and instructor in Greek
  - 1898-1899 Malden High School, Malden, MA principal
  - 1899 regional manager of C & C Electric, Boston
  - 1899-1909 owner/ manager of Palmer Fleet
- other: Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers Beacon Trust Co., director
  - participated in formation of Lake Webster Yacht Club
  - had rheumatism, arthritis

Palmer, Marie Elizabeth (Convers)

- c. Albert York (1830-1886) and Elizabeth Potoski (Caswell) (1837-1924) Convers
- b. 1860 May in Taunton, MA
- d. 1954
- m. 1895 July 17, in Taunton, MA, to William F. Palmer (1859-1909) of Webster, MA
- children: see above
- brother: Albert E. Convers of Cleveland, OH owned shares in Palmer vessels 1st president of Dow Chemical m. Fannie W. Crane (?-1916) Fannie's sister Martha (?-1915) m. Albert L. Fuller, asst. manager of Palmer Fleet
- sister: \_\_\_\_\_ m. Berthold Huber of Huber Press Works, Taunton, MA
- business: worked for Taunton Water Dept. before her marriage and then in husband's business

Gfroerer, Fannie (Palmer)

- c. William Franklin and Marie Elizabeth (Convers) Palmer
- b. 1899 May/ June in Dorchester, MA
- m. \_\_\_\_\_ Gfroerer
- lived: Hamden, CT
- education: Radcliffe College ?



Palmer, Paul

c. William Franklin and Marie Elizabeth (Convers) Palmer

b. 1901 June 19, Dorchester, MA

m. 1) ?

2) ? [one wife from Cuba]

children: Philip Paul Centurion and Peter (twins) Marie Elizabeth

lived: Ft. Lauderdale ?

education: Harvard, 1922 ?

business: career in Cuba [fled Castro] raised chickens in Florida

other: interested in yacht racing

## Appendix B

### Vessel Information

N. B. No Hull No. 13 was assigned.

|  |                     |                     |                      |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>BAKER PALMER</b>  | 5m Sch              | Launched 10/1/1901  | Off. Number: 3,902   |
| 2,792 tons   | 284.9 x 46.5 x 21.9 | Cost:               | Signal Letters: KRFS |
| Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro  | For: Palmer Fleet   |                     | Hull: 5              |
| First Master: Thomas McLaughlin of Boothbay, ME  |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: foundered at sea en route to Buenos Aires, December, 1915 crew saved  |                     |                     |                      |
| <b>DAVIS PALMER</b>  | 5m Sch              | Launched 11/28/1905 | Off. Number: 202,658 |
| 2,965 tons   | 305.4 x 48.4 x 27.2 | Cost: \$135,000     | Signal Letters: KVDG |
| Built by: Percy & Small, Bath, ME  | For: Palmer Fleet   |                     | Hull: 14             |
| First Master: Leroy K. McKown of Malden, MA (1869-1909)  |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: dragged anchor in storm & foundered off Graves Light, Boston, Dec., 1909 all lost   |                     |                     |                      |
| <b>DOROTHY PALMER</b>  | 5m Sch              | Launched 11/28/1903 | Off. Number: 157,695 |
| 2,872 tons   | 294.6 x 46.2 x 22.8 | Cost:               | Signal Letters: KSLV |
| Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro  | For: Palmer Fleet   |                     | Hull: 8              |
| First Master: J. Clement Harding of Chatham, MA  |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: wrecked off Monomoy, March, 1923 all saved  |                     |                     |                      |
| Remarks: last of Palmer Fleet afloat   |                     |                     |                      |
| <b>ELIZABETH PALMER</b>  | 5m Sch              | Launched 8/26/1903  | Off. Number: 200,201 |
| 3,065 tons   | 300.4 x 48.3 x 28.3 | Cost: \$135,000     | Signal Letters: KSPW |
| Built by: Percy & Small, Bath  | For: Palmer Fleet   |                     | Hull: 10             |
| First Master: Daniel B. Smith of Norwood, MA   |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: collision with <b>Washingtonian</b> (str), January, 1915 both sank eventually   |                     |                     |                      |
| Remarks: not designed by WFP hull purchased after construction started 2nd largest schooner afloat for a time involved in other collisions |                     |                     |                      |
| <b>FANNIE PALMER (1)</b>   | 5m Sch              | Launched 11/8/1900  | Off. Number 121,161  |
| 2,258 tons   | 266.1 x 44.6 x 25.1 | Cost:               | Signal Letters: KQLP |
| Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro  | For: Palmer Fleet   |                     | Hull: 3              |
| First Master: George V. Williams of Wellfleet and Boston   |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: collision with <b>Charles D. Hall</b> (sch) <b>Fannie</b> abandoned but later salvaged and sold                               |                     |                     |                      |
| Remarks: named for WFP's daughter renamed <b>George R. Hudson</b> after salvage  |                     |                     |                      |
| <b>FANNIE PALMER (2)</b>   | 5m Sch              | Launched 5/25/1907  | Off. Number: 204,125 |
| 2,233 tons   | 263.7 x 45 x 21.3   | Cost: \$117,000     | Signal Letters: KWCN |
| Built by: Percy & Small, Bath  | For Palmer Fleet    |                     | Hull: 15             |
| First Master: Walter B. Willey of Thomaston, ME  |                     |                     |                      |
| Disposition: abandoned at sea, December, 1916, off Gibraltar crew saved  |                     |                     |                      |
| Remarks: named for WFP's daughter, who christened vessel   |                     |                     |                      |

**FULLER PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 11/10/1908 Off. Number: 205,850  
3,060 tons 309.4 x 48.9 x 27.4 Cost: Signal Letters: KWSD  
Built by: Percy & Small, Bath For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 16  
First Master: Otis W. Clarke of Boston and Bath  
Disposition: abandoned at sea January, 1914 crew saved same storm sunk the **Prescott Palmer**  
Remarks: named for friend, shareholder, asst. manager Albert L. Fuller

**HARWOOD PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 11/08/1904 Off. Number: 261,549  
2,885 tons 301.7 x 46.3 x 27.8 Cost: Signal Letters: KTMN  
Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 11  
First Master: James E. Creighton of Thomaston, ME  
Disposition: sunk by mine near St. Nazaire, France, June 1917 crew saved  
Remarks: collision with **Juniata** (str), September, 1905, Boston [see Series II]

**JANE PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 8/11/1904 Off. Number: 201,484  
3,138 tons 308.6 x 49 x 22.4 Cost: Signal Letters: KTLN  
Built by: John M. Brown, East Boston For: see Remarks Hull: 12  
First Master: Walter B. Willey of Thomaston  
Disposition: foundered off Cape Hatteras, January, 1921 crew saved  
Remarks: not designed by WFP hull bought at auction and completed by WFP

**MARIE PALMER** 4m Sch Launched 1/10/1900 Off. Number: 93,003  
1,904 tons 253.4 x 43.3 x 24.2 Cost: Signal Letters: KPNL  
Built by: William Rogers, Bath For: see Remarks Hull: 1  
First Master: George V. Williams of Boston  
Disposition: stranded on Outer Frying Pan Shoal while being towed, Dec., 1909 broke up  
Remarks: WFP bought frame from C. V. Minott (Phippsburg, ME) not much designed by WFP  
1/4 owned by Lorenzo D. Baker, United Fruit Co. named for WFP's wife

**MAUDE PALMER** 4m Sch Launched 8/15/1900 Off. Number: 93,066  
1,745 tons 231.6 x 42.6 x 23.5 Cost: \$70,000 Signal Letters: KQGM  
Built by: William Rogers, Bath For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 2  
First Master: David H. Sumner of Boston (native of Maine)  
Disposition: foundered off Mobile Bay, August, 1915 "missing" with all hands

**PAUL PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 8/ca.15/1902 Off. Number: 150,962  
2,193 tons 276.1 x 44.2 x 24.4 Cost: Signal Letters: KRVN  
Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 7  
First Master: Charles E. Risley of Pleasantville, NH  
Disposition: [?] burned at sea with no cargo aboard, June, 1913  
Remarks: first passage Boston to Cape Henry in 59 hours with 4,000 tons of coal aboard  
named for WFP's son

**PRESCOTT PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 1/23/1902 Off. Number: 150,930  
2,811 tons 288.1 x 46.2 x 27.2 Cost: Signal Letters: KRLN  
Built by: New England Co., Bath For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 6  
First Master: David H. Sumner of Boston  
Disposition: 2 gales back-to-back off Cape Cod, January, 1914 abandoned in sinking condition  
crew saved same storm sank **Fuller Palmer**  
Remarks: stern badly damaged in collision with **Pennsylvania** (str), December, 1905

**REBECCA PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 3/5/1901 Off. Number: 111,328  
2,556 tons 260.4 x 46.1 x 27.4 Cost: Signal Letters: KQPV  
Built by: Cobb, Butler & Co., Rockland For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 4  
First Master: David H. Sumner of Boston  
Disposition: [?] foundered  
Remarks: damaged by German submarine off Irish Coast, 1917

**SINGLETON PALMER** 5m Sch Launched 5/?/1904 Off. Number: 200,793  
2,859 tons 294.9 x 45.4 x 28.2 Cost: Signal Letters: KTBH  
Built by: George L. Welt, Waldoboro For: Palmer Fleet Hull: 9  
First Master: William H. Potter of Orient, Long Island  
Disposition: rammed and sunk by Clyde liner **Apache** off Delaware, 1921  
Remarks: named for shareholders James & Ernest Singleton of Woonsocket, RI, worsted  
wool manufacturers

## Appendix C

### Series III, Drawings (PL-8) Intermediate Mylars Available 1/14/94

#### **Rebecca Palmer**

sail plan 4'  
after house (cabin) plan 3'  
midship house plan 2'  
midship section, 3 decks 2'  
midship section, 2 decks and beams 2'

#### **Elizabeth Palmer**

sail plan 4'  
after house (cabin) plan 3'  
midship house plan 2'  
forward house plan 2'

#### **Marie Palmer**

forward house plan (blueprint) 2'  
block list 2'

#### **Fannie Palmer (1)**

after house (cabin) finish elevation 2'

#### Sch. #5 [**Baker Palmer** ? and probably others]

lines 3'  
lines (different) 3'  
body plan 2'  
body plan (reduced scale) 1'  
midship section 2'

#### **Harwood Palmer**

after house (cabin) finish elevation 2'  
after house (cabin) plan 2'

#### **Singleton Palmer**

arrangement of deck beams 4'

## Appendix D

### Bibliography

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  - Maine vessel index
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  - Captains' File
- Parker, Lt. W. J. Lewis, USCG. *The Great Coal Schooners of New England 1870-1909*. Marine Historical Association, Inc. Vol. II. No. 6. December 10, 1948.
- Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers. *Transactions*, Vol. 15, 1907, pp. 84 and 201.

## Appendix E

### Palmer Artifacts, P93.63.22 - 65

- 4 half models of schooners
- 2 half models of yachts
- 2 full models of yacht
- 1 rigged model (**Fannie Palmer**)
- 2 lamps
- 13 drafting instruments
- 3 ephemera re: schooners
- 2 lift models
- 4 misc. models
- 11 flags and pennants, inc. house flag

## **Appendix F**

### **Added Entries**



**Acushla** (yacht)  
 Advertising  
**Arkansas** (Monitor : BM7)  
 Arthur Sewall & Co.  
**Baker Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Boston Oregon Mast Co.  
 Boston, Plymouth & Provincetown Steamboat Co.  
 Bristol Academy (MA)  
 Catboats  
 C. C. Dennett  
 Coal trade  
 Cohan, George M.  
 Convers, Albert E.  
**Cuba** (tug)  
**Davis Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Deeds  
**Dorothy Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 E. A. Wentworth  
 Education  
**Elizabeth Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Ephemera  
**Fannie Palmer** (1) (5m schooner)  
**Fannie Palmer** (2) (5m schooner)  
 Field family  
 Fin keels  
 Fuller, Albert L.  
**Fuller Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 George L. Welt Shipyard  
**George W. Wells** (5m schooner)  
 Gfroerer, Fannie (Palmer)  
**Gov. Brooks** (5m schooner)  
**Hanniel** (schooner, yacht)  
**Hartford** (bark)  
 Harvard College (MA)  
**Harwood Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Hyde Windlass Co.  
**Jane Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 John H. Dialogue & Son  
**Jos. Clark** (tug)  
 J. S. Winslow & Co.  
 Legal documents  
 Letter books  
 Maine--Businesses  
**Manheim** (schooner-barge)  
**Marie Palmer** (4m schooner)  
**Maude Palmer** (4m schooner)  
 McIntyre & Kirk  
**Mozetta** (bark)  
**Nathaniel Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Naval architects  
 Naval architecture  
 New England Co.  
 O. Sheldon Co.  
**Palm** (motor vessel, yacht)

Palmer, Fannie  
 Palmer, Jane  
 Palmer, Marie Elizabeth (Convers)  
 Palmer, Paul  
 Palmer, William Franklin  
 Palmer family  
 Palmer Fleet  
**Palmetto** (schooner, yacht)  
**Palmyra** (sloop, yacht)  
 Parker, W. J. Lewis  
**Parolus** (yacht)  
**Paul Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Percy & Small shipyard  
 Photographs  
 Prescott, J.  
**Prescott Palmer** (5m schooner)  
**Priscilla** (str)  
**Rahnee** (sloop, yacht)  
**Rebecca Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Rogers, Cornelia S.  
**Samuel W. Fancher** (schooner-barge)  
 Schooners  
 Scrapbooks  
 Sewall, Arthur  
 Sewall, Edward  
 Shipbuilding  
 Shipbuilding--Contracts  
 Ship captains  
 Shipping  
 Ships--Owners  
 Shipyards--Bath (ME)  
 Shipyards--Rockland (ME)  
 Shipyards--Waldoboro (ME)  
**Singleton Palmer** (5m schooner)  
 Stock certificates  
 Storms  
 Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers  
**Wander Bird** (sch, yacht)  
 Webster (MA)--Deeds  
 Wilbur, G. B.  
 Williams College (MA)  
**Wm. L. Douglas** (5m schooner)  
 Wm. Rogers  
 Yacht brokers  
 Yachts and yachting  
 Yawl boats